

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

Respecting Mrs. Annie Besant, F.T.S., the *National Reformer* has some words of explanation. The "godless member for Northampton" does not fancy the sudden conversion of his editorial colleague. It certainly is an odd collocation—Mrs. Besant, F.T.S., but I congratulate Mrs. Besant—and the Theosophical Society. She is a woman who has the courage of her opinions, and she has exchanged a chill and dreary creed for one that has at least the warmth and glow of charity and brotherly love. Mr. Bradlaugh writes:—

"An Atheist certainly cannot be a Theosophist. A Deist might be a Theosophist. A Monist could not be a Theosophist. Theosophy must at least involve Dualism. Modern Theosophy, according to Madame Blavatsky, as set out in last week's issue, asserts much I do not believe, and alleges some things which to me are certainly not true. I have not had the opportunity of reading Madame Blavatsky's two volumes, but I have read during the past ten years many publications from the pen of herself, Colonel Olcott, and of other Theosophists. They appear to me to have sought to rehabilitate a kind of Spiritualism in Eastern phraseology. I think many of their allegations utterly erroneous, and their reasonings wholly unsound. I very deeply indeed regret that my colleague and co-worker has, with somewhat of suddenness, and without any interchange of ideas with myself, adopted as facts matters which seem to me as unreal as it is possible for any fiction to be. My regret is greater as I know Mrs. Besant's devotion to any course she believes to be true. I know that she will always be earnest in the advocacy of any views she undertakes to defend, and I look to possible developments of her Theosophic opinions with the very gravest misgivings. The editorial policy of this paper is unchanged, and is directly antagonistic to all forms of Theosophy. I would have preferred on this subject to have held my peace, for the publicly disagreeing with Mrs. Besant on her adoption of Socialism has caused pain to both; but on reading her article and taking the public announcement made of her having joined the Theosophical organisation, I owe it to those who look to me for guidance to say this with clearness.' Mrs. Besant, in a short note says:—'On matters of religious opinion, the members are absolutely free. The founders of the society deny a personal God, and a somewhat subtle form of Pantheism is taught as the Theosophic view of the universe, though even this is not forced on members of the society. I have no desire to hide the fact that this form of Pantheism appears to me to promise solution of some problems, especially problems in psychology, which Atheism leaves untouched.'"

It is interesting to observe how the Agnostics take Mrs. Besant's conversion. In the *Agnostic Journal*, where (strange conjunction!) half a page of advertisement is devoted to Theosophical publications, including *Lucifer* and the *Secret Doctrine*, and "LIGHT" is cited in its notice of *Why I am an Agnostic*, "Saladin" writes thus, and I quote his words—his very significant words—because they are to me one of the signs of the times—these very distressful and

chaotic times, in which "the old order changeth, giving place to new."

"Mrs. Annie Besant is now a member of the Theosophical Society. There are the susceptibilities of development and the courage of martyr zeal about this lady which I, for one, admire. I ventured to predict years ago that she would scale the walls of Atheism within which she was for the time incarcerated. I augured that, from her tenderness, earnestness, and *spirituelle*, she would discover that in psychics, not in physics, is hidden the key with which the arcana of Being must be unlocked. I concede this to her with all the more grace because, unlike her, I am *not* a Theosophist, although I accept the philosophical substrata on which Theosophy is based, and entertain a respect for the personality and genius of Madame Blavatsky which amounts to a sort of *ecce* veneration.

"Mrs. Besant I credit with having searched for Truth with the chivalrous unselfishness with which Sir Galahad of the Round Table went in quest of the Saint Grael. She has dipped her cup into Truth's well, and so have I; but her cup differs widely in shape and fashion from mine. The contents of her chalice, which she deems nectar, I consider balefully mingled with poison, and, of course, the contents of my cup must seem so to her. Her Socialism is to me only malicious insanity; and, to me, her neo-Malthusianism is so abhorrent that I have assailed it mercilessly, and possibly with more vigour than good taste. But, in spite of this, I have always felt that there was more in common between herself and me than between myself and any other Atheistic leaders. She alone seemed to have any considerable aptitude for metaphysics or premonition that Materialistic Atheism could not touch even the fringe of the graver problems of psychology or satisfy the irrepressible intuition, in all except those of the grosser clay, to yearn for a world beyond the world, to see the Unseen, to know the Unknowable, and to reach out into the ocean which has never yet been sounded by the plummets of our philosophy. And she alone had been subjected to the academic discipline which imparts exactness and solidarity to mental accomplishment. As an acolyte in the temple of Truth, I wish Mrs. Besant a fraternal God-speed.

"And Truth is this to me, and that to thee,
And Truth, or clothed or naked let it be."

Mrs. Besant has herself addressed to the world her *apologia* under the title "*Sic itur ad Astra* : or, Why I Became a Theosophist." From any point of view it is an utterance of ability (*that* goes without saying), of frank candour, and of great interest as showing the operation of the spiritual forces now actively at work. I wish I could quote more fully from it, for it is typical, and to us most instructive. The minds of the new epoch that is now in the birth throes *will not, cannot* rest in materialism. The very Materialists, as they profess themselves still to be, are becoming more spiritual than some Spiritualists, as they professed themselves to be, whom I have known in days gone by. I used to wonder much that Spiritualism had done so little for some Spiritualists. They were no better for their professed faith than they would have been for a perfunctory observation of a fungus. They were not spiritualised, their souls were not elevated or nurtured; they dragged spirit down to the plane of matter, and never succeeded in raising themselves or others to the plane of spirit. Even a room full of cabinets of fungi would not necessarily add to a man's real knowledge. Long years of "physical phenomena," with raps and tilts and materialised forms,

aptly descending to the earthly level, had not added to their real knowledge of spirit.

I have wondered at this until I got to see that these phenomena were not intended to spiritualise. The work of destruction had to go before the work of construction. Long generations of men, to whom spirit was an unknown quantity, who had learned to dread any form of belief as in its action somehow associated with superstition and priestcraft, had made it fashionable, respectable, to confine science to the investigation of matter, and religion to the muttering of some shibboleths in the form of a creed respecting which it was heresy to think. Faith—on one day “dead, being alone”—works on six days on matter of real interest. If a man ventured to study psychics at all it was from the side of disease. His psychology was morbid. When the world of spirit began to impinge on the world of matter, the first step of necessity was to demonstrate its existence by such evidence as would best appeal to these stunted intellects—stunted, because they were developed only on one side. It was the raps and so-called physical phenomena that broke down the wall of prejudice and convinced men, who never would have been convinced otherwise, of the action of a force governed by an intelligence outside of a human brain. It has taken nearly half a century, but now the attention of the world is thoroughly aroused. Witness the shaking of dry bones all round us. Witness the way in which the most candid minds of the old generation, and the best, most progressive and able minds of the coming age are opening themselves to the subtle psychical influences that surround us. Witness the work of the Society for Psychical Research, in its demonstration of the unsuspected powers of the incarnate spirit, and in its odd hesitation as to what to do with the rest of Spiritualism.

Witness, too, what started me on this line of thought—the conversion of Mrs. Besant, F.T.S. In her *Apologia* she approaches the question with characteristic directness:—

“Everyone who has studied at all deeply the problems of psychology must have been conscious, over and over again, of coming to a deadlock, of running against a blank wall which barred all further progress. We trace molecular vibration from the peripheral end of a sensory nerve up to its centre in the brain; we find suddenly in existence what we call a sensation, then a perception; and as the vibration, the sensation, the perception, form an invariable sequence under normal conditions, we relate one as cause to the others. But the causal link escapes us; there is no common measure between the vibrating nerve cell and the mental activity; one can be measured, calculated, its material seen and weighed, it has form and colour; the other is formless, placeless, timeless, escapes all material instruments. Who that has thought but has longed to throw a bridge across this gulf, and bring the worlds of space and mind into touch? But here materialistic science—splendid as are its triumphs in other fields—has no light for us, and the more earnest the student the more bitterly felt is the ever-renewed disappointment. The great majority accept the inevitable, whisper “Unknowable,” and turn to fields of inquiry that promise richer harvest. A few remain restless, gazing at the blank wall, and, if a fairly long ladder comes along, try their luck at scaling it.”

She has made a dash out of the Sahara in which she had long wandered, tried her luck at scaling the blank wall, and has dropped gaily into the garden of Theosophy. The which in its interior significance imports a recognition of what she had previously ignored or denied. That is the point. To us Spiritualists there can be nothing but cause for rejoicing that such steps are being taken by those who have the ear of a section of hard thinking people whom we have no power to reach. The details of the belief will settle themselves—and if they do not I, for one, shall not go in sackcloth—but the fact is one of profound significance.

Surely there must be a thought atmosphere surrounding us. About the time when the “Keys of the Creeds” was

being written, and when other books on kindred lines of thought were being published, I received a number of automatic writings which impressed me a good deal. They set forth the germ of truth that lay at the root of every religion that the world had possessed—or rather the chief of them. The idea was to show that each religion had one and only one conception of many-sided truth, and that the world was now ripe for a more comprehensive view of God and our relations with the world of spirit. If my *Spirit Teachings* had been selected on a definite and orderly plan (which they were not, at least by me), I should have included this group of teaching in that volume. They were germane to its general subject, and contained matter that was new to me, and would have been instructive to my readers. The book of writings, however, was put aside, and, though I often looked at it and proposed to myself to print its contents, I never did. Something always interfered, and I gathered that the time was not come for what I proposed. Quite recently my attention was drawn to a book in which, when I came to read it, I found the information that I had had given to me in these writings elaborated at great length with much other matter that was new to me. *The Ten Great Religions* is an essay in comparative theology intended to show the relation of various religions to Christianity. It elaborates in some 500 pages, and twelve long chapters, an idea very similar to that contained in my writings. These, however, are quite short and superficial compared with the exhaustive chapters of this book.

Observe, this particular volume is brought to my notice now when I am preparing my writings for insertion in “LIGHT”; and I read for the first time what was in existence at the time when these teachings were given. The book (now in its twenty-sixth edition) was developed from six papers published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1868. These deal with Ethnic Religions, Confucianism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroaster, and the gods of Egypt. My own writings take a wider scope, but not wider than the completed volume on the ten religions covers. They bear to it the relation that a very brief and partial account of a wide subject would bear to an exhaustive dissertation on it.

This is not all. On my table lies *The Two Worlds*. I open it and find that Mrs. Hardinge Britten has been moved at this particular juncture to re-publish her *Faiths, Facts, and Frauds of Religious History*, originally compiled not so much later than the year when my writings were given. The subject is stated to be “the origin of ancient faiths and their relation to Christianity,” a theme very similar to that elaborated in the *Ten Great Religions*, and lightly sketched in my own writings. I take up another paper, the *Agnostic Journal*, and find it hammering at a cognate subject under the head of “Religion and Religions.” My correspondence shows traces of similar lines of thought every day. Am I not justified, then, in inquiring whether there is not a thought-atmosphere of which all who are sufficiently developed partake, and in which none has exclusive right?

I have come upon a letter which shows how the Persians regard sleep as a period of bodily repose and psychical activity. The Easterns hold that opinion, but it is open to question whether such temporary sundering takes place except in that profound and dreamless sleep of which we get so little. The communication is to the *Daily Telegraph*.

“SIR,—In your interesting account of the Shah’s visit to London, in your issue of to-day, reference is made to the unwillingness of his Majesty’s attendants to waken him from sleep at any time. My son, Alexander Finn, now her Majesty’s consul at Malaga, resided in Persia during many years at Teheran, at Rasht, and on special duty on the Afghan boundary. His Persian servants never would, for any consideration, abruptly awaken him from sleep. The

reason they gave was that during sleep the soul departs from the body and wanders at will elsewhere, and that if a sleeper be suddenly aroused, so that the soul has not time to return to its home in the body, instant death of the person may follow. This idea is similar to that held from ancient times by the Yogis of India, as mentioned by Sir Monier Monier-Williams in his recently published book on Buddhism.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

E. A. FINN, Widow of the late British
Consul for Jerusalem and Palestine.

The Elms, Brook-green, London, W.
July 5th, 1889.

M. PELLETIER'S CURIOUS EXPERIMENTS.

Allusion has already been made in these columns to the alleged discovery of M. Pelletier, that the small end of an hen's egg is positive and the large end negative, and that, by holding the egg pointed to the forehead of a sensitive, so that the small end touches it in the middle, just at the roots of the hair, magnetic sleep will be induced. So deep is the sleep that no shaking or pinching will disturb it. Pepper on the nose or eyes produces no effect. The "subject" sleeps on, "presenting, at times, all the appearance of a corpse." To rouse the patient it is necessary only to present the other end of the egg at the same point, and consciousness is restored.

Another of M. Pelletier's curious experiments was with a young woman of his village who was needlewoman in his family. He placed her in a chair with her feet on the ground, and applied the "positive pole of a carrot" (the small end we suppose) to the little toe of her positive foot—the (right, is it?) "At the end of five minutes" (he writes to the *Revue Spirite*) "her foot was glued to the floor, and the leg was completely dead: and, notwithstanding tremendous efforts on her part to move her leg and raise her foot, she was unable to do so. The effect spread to the upper part of her body as far as the armpit, and her arm became numb and almost paralysed." Reversing the carrot removed the sensation or absence of sensation in the side of the body. No wonder the young woman thought the devil was in the carrot: her priest confirmed her in that opinion, and a remarkable sensitive was lost to science. One wonders whether egg and carrot are not mere vehicles for the will of the operator, and whether any other vehicle would not do just as well.

M. Pelletier also makes other queer experiments. He takes a small table, and on it lays a wooden penholder. Two inches above it he gets his sensitives to hold their hands. "After about a couple of minutes the penholder moves an eighth of an inch or so, after which it stays quiet for a couple of minutes more, and then moves about the same distance and is quiet again. All of a sudden it begins to move quickly, and runs round the top of the table as if it were mad." A little pinewood box is more intractable, moves a little, but after a longer time, and does not career madly about.

Repeated experiments with the same object lessened the time required to move it. No formal holding of the hands over the article was necessary; no attention or concentration of will was required. If a sensitive sat at the table the penholder soon commenced its movements. This is quite in accord with the result of experiments familiar to Spiritualists. At first a strange table has to be charged with the psychic force of medium and circle. Once this is done it moves more and more readily even without contact of the hands of the sitters.

The following experiments are still more striking. They were tried with a peacock's feather and two ordinary corks. M. Pelletier says: "My four sensitives sit round the little table, and in the middle of it I place the feather, which soon begins to move. I say, 'turn round,' and it rotates. I say, 'dance,' and it moves as if it wished to do so. . . I say, 'march,' and it does so and reaches the edge of the table. I say, 'jump over the edge,' and it

does so and falls on the floor. Presently I pretend to be angry with it and say severely, 'I don't want to have anything more to do with you. Be off.' The feather begins to run, jumps over the edge of the table, and disappears. Then I take the two corks, and place them beside each other in the middle of the table. . . I order them to separate and go each to its own side. With perfect docility they separate and go to opposite sides of the table. Then I say, 'Go together again and embrace each other.' They approach each other and touch as if they were kissing. I then tell them to separate and go each to his side of the table and jump off. My order is executed to the letter."

We tell the story in brief, as M. Pelletier has told it in the *Revue Spirite* and the *Chaine Magnetique*, and we are indebted to the *Theosophist* for drawing our attention to it. What is the explanation?

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

President Kiddle recently delivered to the American Spiritualist Alliance the subjoined address on re-assuming the chair. It will be interesting to our readers to peruse what so old and able a Spiritualist said to a body exactly parallel in end and aim to our own London Spiritualist Alliance.

THE DUTIES OF THE HOUR, IN THE WORK OF THE AMERICAN SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

"At the last meeting of the Alliance, when elected to resume the office of its President, resigned some seven or eight years ago, I found myself unable to decide positively whether it was best for the organisation, best for the cause which we are trying to serve, and best for myself in view of many personal considerations, for me to accept this position, fraught as it is with so many cares and responsibilities.

"I cannot say even now that I have decided these questions fully to my own satisfaction, but I have come to the conclusion to assume the office at least temporarily and experimentally, so as to determine by an actual trial whether, through the associative and corporate functions of this organisation, and with the earnest and harmonious co-operation of its members, something of still greater value and importance than hitherto can be done in behalf of the cause of true Spiritualism, which means so much in the present agitated condition of the world of mind, and promises so much as an agent for the real progress of humanity.

"I have, therefore, taken the chair at this meeting, and, with your permission, will commence my work by addressing a few words to you in regard to the duties of the hour and the part of them that pertain to the American Spiritualist Alliance.

"In the first place, we are Spiritualists, and neither afraid nor ashamed to avow the fact. There is no more appropriate term to apply to those who, with the demonstrative evidences we have had, affirm the truths and profess and practise the principles which rest upon these irrefutable proofs.

"We do not wish to confine our researches and studies to an investigation of the sensuous manifestations in which the spiritual movement originated, and upon which it still mainly depends. This can be done with but little regard to the spiritual element, which is the very life and soul of the movement; but to study spiritual phenomena and neglect the principles and philosophical truths which they teach is to be merely a Spiritist and we know by many illustrations that Spiritism is in most respects a barren tree.

"It is true every Spiritualist must be a Spiritist to the extent of an acquaintance with, and an acceptance of, the phenomena which afford a positive proof of the continuity of life, both as to its actuality and its most obvious characteristics; otherwise his principles would be merely speculative, like those of so many who shun these demonstrations of the spirit on the material plane, resting satisfied with a faith which, however strong in their own minds, as supported by their own spiritual intuitions, cannot be imparted or verified to others.

"If mankind are to be made spiritual by fully realising in their thoughts and actions the existence of the spirit-world and its denizens, it must, therefore, be from a due observation and study of the sensuous phenomena which not only prove this great fact, but familiarise the mind to the contemplation of it

as an objective reality of far greater interest to them than any other object or subject in their whole environment.

"Does not this obvious need of objective spiritual phenomena afford a most logical *raison d'être* for the possibility of such manifestations, or rather for the law of the Great Supreme, which permits their occurrence, particularly at a time when materialistic thought and spiritual ignorance become so predominant as they are at the present time?"

"Is it not, then, one of the most pressing duties of the hour that we should give a rational and discriminative encouragement and support to every phase of mediumship that is genuine and honestly exercised? Every kind of manifestation is valuable to those who would make a comprehensive and scientific study of this great, this exhaustless subject. No fact that is truly a fact, carefully observed in all its conditions and concomitant circumstances, and accurately recorded, can fail to be instructive and valuable as a contribution to the science of Spiritism, now so incomplete in its development and arrangement, though a great mass of materials for its proper exposition have been collected.

"It is much to be regretted that mediumship and the phenomena presented through it have hitherto been by so few and so imperfectly studied according to truly scientific methods, and by means of conditions directed by spiritual principles. Hence it is that, to a great extent, we are compelled to disregard the ordinary accounts of séances and fall back upon the researches of such accredited explorers as Hare, Crookes, and Zollner for indisputable evidences of our facts; while, undoubtedly there is a vast mass of facts presented in the ordinary circles that deserve a most attentive study. Indeed, it seems to me that we need almost a new movement in order to bring about a fully reliable exploration of spiritual facts, by persons of intelligence and experience on conditions based on the known laws and principles of the subject, not by mere materialistic methods.

"When the Psychical Research Society of London was formed, I had some hope that, composed as it was of men so thoroughly experienced in the investigation of nature, and accustomed to apply logical principles to such investigation, it would, as it rapidly passed from the narrow field of psychics and emerged into the more comprehensive one of Spiritualism, develop such principles and methods as are needed to afford a truly scientific exposition of the subject.

"But the proceedings of this pretentious Society have been such as to show that this anticipation presupposed a condition of human nature that, even with high culture, it is as yet too weak to attain—a condition of freedom from that timidity in the face of social and professional prejudice and vulgar condemnation that darkens the mind and paralyses the reason. It is amazing that a real *savant* should fail to perceive the difference between explaining a fact or a phenomenon, and explaining it away; and that such a person should be unable to choose properly between the just passivity of nature's true disciple, and the party arrogance that would dictate *a priori* what she ought to display to him, not indeed for his instruction, but merely for the confirmation of his profound intuitions. How can the discovery of truth result from such puerile and perverse searchings? Nature conceals her face from all such shallow and presumptuous prying, with a veil more impenetrable than that of Isis; and this is even more true of her spiritual than of her physical features.

"By these few observations I wish to show you that, whatever principles I may have deduced from the spiritual phenomena which I have witnessed, and however far I have endeavoured to rise towards a just and practical conception of what those principles really mean to us in our relation to the world into which we all are to pass, sooner or later, I am very far from a disposition to undervalue the importance of those researches which are employed with the external manifestations; and I believe that, in a judicious manner, the American Spiritualist Alliance should use its best opportunities and endeavours to cultivate and enlarge this field of spiritual knowledge.

"But, my friends, there are many discriminations to be made here. The public mind needs enlightenment in regard to this matter especially, because it has been so greatly misled and deceived therein; and if the Alliance is at all faithful in the exercise of its functions, it can do much towards the correction of prevailing conceptions in this regard.

"Again, the public mind is perhaps even more incorrect in its conceptions of the real character of what true Spiritualism is in its teachings and their tendencies. The hostile statements and violent fulminations of many so-called Christian ministers

have done very much to create false impressions that for many years—it may be generations—will present barriers against the advance of truth. Working upon the traditional ideas implanted by Church dogmas, they have sought to repress the new revelations of the existence and nature of the spirit-world by industriously representing all the visitants from it as being merely the emissaries of the mythical Satan, the impersonation of unmingled evil and sin. It is a serious duty devolving upon the friends of spiritual truth to study how to neutralise the poison of this false teaching and to undermine the system from which it proceeds, though supported, as it is so strongly, by social customs and institutions, together with a vast money power that gives to it all the influence of conventional respectability.

"I perceive, however, quite clearly, the intervening powers of good, or God, that are quietly operating to circumvent and ultimately to destroy these really cosmocratic agencies that oppose truth in the guise of Divine ministrants, while they are in fact but the representatives and supporters of the greatest system of consolidated and organised selfishness on the earth. It is one of the most urgent duties of the hour to work with the friends of Truth, both seen and unseen, in the endeavour to check these opponents of the New Dispensation—the only source of hope that is visible to the eye of the philanthropist gazing on the present spiritual darkness and materialistic corruptions of this age. For would not a realising sense of what this life truly is, in relation to the life beyond, and the overwhelming interests that centre in the latter, go far toward the regeneration, by which I mean the true spiritualisation of mankind—toward convincing them that they are not at present serving their best interests in their exclusive devotion to the things that belong only to this most uncertain, most transitory state of being? While the habitudes, the virtues, the spiritual culture which they can carry with them into the life hereafter constitute an accumulation of wealth that can never be lost or diminished, but must truly prove a 'joy for ever.'

"How are we, as humble workers upon this plane of effort, to act—to use our opportunities—so that we shall feel in the great hereafter, in the sphere of self-contemplation, self-judgment and self-condemnation or approval, that we have used those opportunities aright, and earned the just recompense of fidelity? What can we do as members of this organisation—not for our own edification or the amusement of a passing hour, but to help on the great movement which, as we believe, is 'the cause of truth and humanity'? That is the chief question for us to study and to show to all with whom we are now in affiliation that we are studying it, not merely theoretically but practically. I wish to impress this most deeply upon your minds, because it is earnestness that we need—that earnestness which brings devotion resulting in faithful effort.

"Our semi-monthly meetings can be made, as they so often have been made, exceedingly interesting and beneficial to ourselves, and at the same time of importance to the cause by the publication of the results of our harmonious discussions of principles and facts. We have had, and we still have, a most earnest coadjutor in the Editor of the *Banner of Light*, the columns of which paper have ever been open to us for all communications in which the public are interested, and by means of which the cause of spiritual truth was to be defended or any way advanced. We owe the most sincere thanks to this able journalist and faithful worker for what he has done, not only through his paper, with its large circulation, but personally to promote the success and increase the efficiency of our organisation.

"I believe our publications should be more numerous and more diversified than they have been, calculated to reach many classes of the people, not only those within the ranks of Spiritualism, but outside—the latter especially. For there are still many millions of people whom a knowledge of the simplest facts of Spiritualism has never reached; and there are millions more who know it only as the Roman, in the time of Tacitus, knew Christianity—as an 'execrable superstition,' opposed to religion, morality, social law, and common decency. Has it not even recently been so denounced by prominent representatives of modern, fashionable Christianity?"

"Our non-resident members naturally look for such publications; and at the close of each year should be able to feel that they have received in the documents forwarded to them far more than the value of the small fee paid for membership in the Alliance. It seems to me, moreover, that we can make such arrangements as will secure from these non-resident members a far more effective co-operation with us, which they would be glad to give, because they would in this way be more thoroughly par-

ticipating in the work of the Alliance. We hope soon to extend considerably the list of non-resident members, and to afford to them the means of active service to which I have briefly referred.

"I find in looking over the records of the Society that affiliations were some time ago established with twenty societies in various parts of this country and Europe; but I have not been able to ascertain to what extent and in what respect there has been a mutual co-operation on the part of the Alliance and these organisations, and what practical results have accrued from this formal affiliation, which I have always regarded as a very interesting and promising feature in the plan of our organisation. I earnestly trust it may be extended more widely and with fruitful results for good."

DO THE DEAD RETURN?

FROM THE *Chicago Times*.

"Several well-dressed gentlemen were chatting pleasantly together in the North-western depot recently, each one waiting for the arrival of the train. None of them, evidently, were residents of the neighbourhood about Chicago. Their conversation had been of a general nature and after a discussion of the Sullivan murder mystery, one of the party exclaimed:—

"Speaking of the mysterious, a great many people imagine that Missouri is the hot-bed of Spiritualism. I suppose it is because Mott has in his time created a considerable sensation. However, I have travelled over that country extensively, and, to my mind, the belief in Spiritualism is quite extensive. I am not so well acquainted with the people of Missouri, not having visited the State since 1865. How is it, Mr. Day?

"The gentleman to whom this remark was addressed did not reply at once. A look of sadness overspread his features, and, dropping his eyes slowly, he stood for a moment in a meditative mood. Then he spoke: 'I cannot say that I care to discuss this question, gentlemen. I have been a resident of Missouri for many years, and her institutions are dear to me. It would be folly to deny that Spiritualism has a hold among our people, but whether to a greater extent than in any other State I cannot, of course, say. I have paid little attention to the subject for the last five years. Many years ago I had an experience that I shall never forget, not until the end of life.

"Among my numerous acquaintances in the city where I then resided were several Spiritualists—ladies and gentlemen they were—and one or two of them were mediums. While I held not the slightest faith in their doctrine, cannot say that I do now (and when I am done you will wonder that I do not), I attended many of their séances. These were held at private residences, and the wealth and social standing of those engaging in them would certainly vouch for the entire honesty of their proceedings. I have no doubt that to a great extent those who participated in these séances were honest in their convictions. Some of them "died in the faith," so they say; others are still living, and are firm believers in this mysterious doctrine. I have seen many strange things at the séances. Faces appeared before me which it was hard to believe were those of any human being. Songs were sung and music produced, the like of which I have never heard before or since. I connived with friends living at a great distance to assist in setting some trap for the mediums, but we could never succeed in confounding one of them. I soon found that much of my time and thought were being occupied by this foolishness, as I deemed it, and resolved to attend no more séances.

"Happening to be in a city some distance away where two of my friends resided, I called upon them. Both were prominent railroad officials. The subject of Spiritualism was introduced, and both gentlemen evinced a desire to witness a séance. Neither had the slightest faith in the doctrine. I told my friends that it could be so arranged that they might attend a séance in my city, and promised to wire them the date when to come. Arrangements were accordingly perfected upon my return, and in a few days I sent them a cipher message that all was well. Both gentlemen arrived by a circuitous route late in the evening, and gave out at the hotel that they had come on official business. Neither of them was known to the Spiritualists or the medium. We repaired to the residence of one of my Spiritualistic friends, and were ushered in.

"A burly porter guarded the front door, and an oppressive stillness pervaded the entire house. At last we were informed that the spirits were willing to communicate with us and an attendant led the party into a large room that was darkened,

save that enough light shone to reveal the cabinet, which was of the usual kind. One or two guests held communications with deceased friends. The two railroad officials watched the proceedings with evident amusement. Suddenly the attendant said:—

"Mr. — is wanted at the cabinet."

"It was one of his friends. 'Who learned my name here?' he asked,

"'No matter,' replied the attendant, 'a relative wishes to communicate with you.'

"Half reluctantly he stepped to the cabinet, gave one look and sprang back, uttering at the same time a low cry of horror.

"Go nearer,' urged the attendant; 'it is your wife who calls.'

"None of us heard what passed between the two. Mr. — remained at the window some little time. He then came back to his seat and wept like a child.

"At that instant the attendant announced a message had been received for Colonel —, the other friend. He walked boldly to the cabinet, stopped, and in a trembling voice, exclaimed: 'My God, Harry, you here?' and turned away. 'I can't look at him,' he cried; 'let us get out from this place.'

"Both the men insisted so strongly that we were allowed to depart. I tell you, gentlemen, those men were changed. They went to the hotel and sat round the bar-room all night. All I could get out of either one of them was the information that they had met dead friends face to face.

"Of course I laughed at them and tried to cheer them up. But it was no use. They returned by the next train, each one saying little, but thinking pretty hard, no doubt.

"But my turn came next. Not long after the experience which I relate occurred I lost by death my only child, a little girl. The blow nearly killed my wife, and she lay ill for many weeks. I—Oh, I was almost crazy for a long time.

"One day I met the medium who had called the spirits of my friends' dead relatives. He came hurriedly towards me and whispered; Mac, come down to-night. I must have you come. Don't fail. I cannot tell you more now, but you must come!

"For the sake of pleasing him I promised to do so, but confess that I mentally resolved at the same time to stay away.

"However, as night drew on, I felt an irresistible something drawing me towards the medium's home. I walked rapidly in the direction, but it seemed as if some unseen force was urging me along faster and faster, until I almost broke into a run. I was hurriedly ushered into the house, and the doors were heavily bolted. I had been in that house many times before, but now it seemed a new, strange place. Moreover, I felt as if I were in a different atmosphere—or something. I can't explain it. Then they called me into the cabinet room. But I did not need any cabinet or any medium to convince me that some unnatural presence was there. I came close to the cabinet and peered into the dark recess. Oh, my God! There was my little Nellie! The same sweet face, the blue eyes, the golden hair! With a cry of joy I sprang forward, and the frail cabinet shook with my weight. 'Be calm,' whispered the attendant, 'Nellie calls you.'

"Then I heard that little voice calling to me: 'Oh, papa, I am so happy. Do you not see the angels that are with me? They go with me everywhere. They tell me I shall soon see mamma. Mamma is coming to me—she is coming to me!'

"I must have fallen insensible, for when I found myself I was on a sofa, receiving attention from some servants. The shock to my system was a terrible one. Do you see this grey head? One night's work. In two weeks, Nellie, my wife, went to meet her Nellie—our Nellie. I did not know how I passed several months following her death. Some of my friends feared that I would lose my reason. I travelled everywhere, and finally, through good care of myself, and change of scene, restored my shattered health to a great extent. But I dropped Spiritualism. Do I believe in it? Well, don't ask me that! I know that I saw my Nellie that night, whether in a trance or a dream I know not."

RITUALISM OF THE SENSES.—"Rome and her Anglican daughter have embalmed Christianity, and given to her the solemnity of a mummy. She lives no more, grows no more. They have clothed her with a gorgeous robe, and bow to their idol."—JOHN PULSFORD.

RITUALISM OF THE UNDERSTANDING.—"Multitudes of Protestants abhor the Popery of vestments, lights, and incense, but they idolise words and doctrinal formulas. The Ritualism of the brain is as distinct from vital Christianity as the Ritualism of the senses."—JOHN PULSFORD.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M. A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, JULY 20th, 1889.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects, good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. and not to the Editor.

SPIRITUALISTIC MATHEMATICS.*

The title of this article is part of the heading of a chapter in a book of which one asks, as one does of so many books, why was it written? That it will in any way encourage the study of mathematics where that study is distasteful is very doubtful; that it may amuse those who know something of the science is very probable.

It is not the business of this journal to review scientific or pseudo-scientific books in general, but only as they bear on those subjects which are of such paramount interest for its readers. Nevertheless, as in the case of Mr. Johnson's book, it is sometimes useful to note the treatment of the given subject as a whole, so as to better evaluate the remarks which an author may make when he comes on to our own ground.

This is the sort of thing we get in this book. Mr. Johnson is showing the wonderful powers of mathematical analysis, as exhibited in the re-discovery of the planet Ceres by Gauss. Piazzi had taken a few observations before his illness, and from these observations Gauss calculated where the planet ought to be. "What an absurd attempt, do you say? You know not the powers of this wonderful analysis. The genius of the great mathematician Gauss, then quite young, succeeded in this herculean task, and when the telescope was pointed to the heavens in the exact spot indicated by the daring computer, there, in the field of view of the telescope, shone the delicate and beautiful light of the long-lost planet." Now this may do very well for the groundlings, but it would be very interesting to know how this "daring computer" could have computed "correctly" as well as "daringly" if Piazzi's observations had not been correct. That Gauss's exploit was an excellent piece of mathematical work, there is no doubt, but the epithets "daring" and "herculean" show a want of knowledge of proportion which is exhibited everywhere through the book. And this is how Mr. Johnson apostrophises the circle "What figure is more often repeated than that of the circle? That curve which meets the eye often enough as we go about our daily task. It is brought before us in the wheels of every vehicle we meet; we behold it in the plates and dishes from which we eat, in the cups and glasses from which we drink. It is the most beautiful, the most perfect,

* *The Uses and Triumphs of Mathematics.* By V. E. JOHNSON, B.A., Magdalene College, Cambridge.

the most useful, and yet the simplest of all curves or forms" and so on.

But big numbers are what Mr. Johnson admires most. One is reminded of Mr. Montague Tigg: "What," asked the secretary, "what will be the paid up capital, according to the next prospectus?" "A figure of two, and as many oughts after it as the printer can get into the same line," answered Mr. Montague. So Mr. Johnson delights in the "appalling minimum number of seventy-four and fifteen oughts" as the number of comets which mathematical investigation has shown to be attached to the solar system. But what an "appalling" number might not some "daring" computer reach if he took to counting, say, the grains of sand in a cubic yard of Ramsgate beach.

Then the writer gets angry with people who talk of making discoveries by accident. "For discoveries" says he, in a curiously arranged sentence, are *not* (as we are so often informed) "the result of accident; the discovery of the aberration of light by Bradley was not the result of accident, nor of the orbits of the planets, nor of universal gravitation." And in another sentence where a "daring" analysis seems somehow to have upset one of the verbs. "Facts (no matter how noticed by the observer) can only become a part of exact knowledge when the discoverer's mind be (*sic*) already provided with precise and suitable conceptions by means of which he may analyse and connect them." To confound facts with the knowledge of those facts is surely a strange mistake on the part of an apostle of precision. One would, of course, like a definition of an accident from this point of view, but that is hardly necessary, for says Mr. Johnson, "Accidents are the theme of the Spiritualist, not of the arithmetician."

And this leads up to the chapter called "Metaphysical or Spiritualistic Mathematics." Here Mr. Johnson falls foul of the pan-geometers, "There are some now-a-days," he says, "who, thinking they are creating a new era of thought (when in reality they are only going back some two or three thousand years, it is the old spirit under a new form), have resumed those old supposed uses of the science and have been good enough to bestow on us, amongst other things, 'a fourth dimension.'" One of these exploded old philosophers, by the way, seems to have been Plato! That is, if Mr. Johnson's earlier pages have been properly understood.

After demolishing Labatschewsky, Riemann, &c., which is so easily done by the assertion that one of these fourth dimensionists *actually assumes the identity of an algebraic multiple with a spacial magnitude* (Mr. Johnson, of course, makes no assumption that he knows what spacial magnitude is) the author proceeds to point out the error of another way of looking at the fourth dimension, "It requires a certain amount of conceivability. But no matter. It supposes you 'to imagine a direction which is *at one and the same time* perpendicular to what we know as height, breadth, and length, that is perpendicular to the sides of a box and yet only in one direction. If it be possible to realise this, further illustration is valueless, geometrical four-dimensional space is already understood, but, if not, further illustration is useless.' Quite so. If any of my readers possess the requisite imagination he or she then understands. For my own part, I can only say *I do not*." That Mr. Johnson's inability to understand anything is in no way conclusive as to the existence of that thing does *not* appear to have struck him. But this, by the way. The importance of the above is that it includes a quotation from a review which appeared in "LIGHT" of December 8th, 1888. In that review, I said, referring to Mr. Hinton's book *A New Era of Thought*,

"Now it is submitted at once that if it be possible in any way to imagine a direction which is *at one and the same time* perpendicular to what we know as height, breadth, and length, that is, perpendicular to the sides of a box, and yet only in one direction,

if it be possible to realise this, further illustration is valueless; geometrical four-dimensional space is already understood. But if it be not possible to do this, then further illustration is equally valueless, for such illustration cannot supersede the immediate appreciation of the fundamental motion. To move *an inch* in this imaginary direction is meaningless, for an inch is one-dimensional, and we have no more evidence that one-dimensional distance in this supposed new space is the same to a dweller in that space, than we have of the existence of our one-dimensional time in the life of the plane-being who is imagined to be getting to know something about our own height, depth, and breadth."

Had Mr. Johnson quoted the passage fully, he would have shown that it is quite possible for a Spiritualist not to lose his head, and though a Spiritualist yet to have some of the habits and methods of the "arithmetician." But it clearly did not suit Mr. Johnson's purpose to show this. Knowing as little of Spiritualism as he evidently does of mathematics, he pours out the old, old story, in the old weak way. So he goes on. "And be not deceived by the wonders that the Spiritualists say man is able to perform, aided by this Psychic Force. These marvels are paltry as compared with those which man has been able to achieve by the assistance of science. Man, *aided by Science*, can tell you the exact number of waves of light emitted from the sun per second, and their exact length" (*can he!*), "he can tell you what a star billions of miles out there in space, is made of (*can he!*). . . . The artist (aided by science) can display to your astonished gaze true and realistic pictures of what this world was like ten thousand or ten hundred thousand or ten millions of years ago (*can he! can he!! can he, indeed!!!*). The man of science is able to make a jet of gas twenty feet distant from him sing, and to continue its song for hours, loud enough to be heard by an assembly of 1,000 people." But this last is too much; who would have supposed that the beautiful experiments in vibratory movement which produce the so-called singing flames, could ever be so misrepresented as this?

But we must leave Mr. Johnson with the assurance that the Spiritualist has "not pretended to solve the mystery of life," and with a recommendation not to write such nonsense as this, "The Spiritualist knows no more than his fellows, only less, because his fellows know that they do not know; they also know that *he* does not know, whereas the Spiritualist does not know that he does not know!"

π.

In Memoriam.

MISS GODFREY.

Our readers will share our regret at the sudden removal of Miss Godfrey. Mr. Peele reports in the *Medium and Daybreak* that

"While crossing Drummond-street, and proceeding to her home up Hampstead-road, a milk-cart turned the corner into Drummond-street. The man driving shouted to her to get out of the way, upon which she instantly dropped to the ground, and although it only took a few minutes to convey her to the Temperance Hospital (which is close by), yet she expired within three minutes of her entrance into that institution. Miss Godfrey, like all persons of the mediumistic genus, was of a highly excitable and nervous temperament. The terror caused by the milkman's stentorian voice undoubtedly sent a shock to the heart, which ceased its beating, and life became extinct."

Miss Godfrey was a good medical clairvoyante, very successful with those patients with whom her sensitive organisation was in touch, less so with others whom she was less able to approach. This peculiar characteristic of very sensitive mediumship she possessed in common with most good mediums. She had also the gift of healing. A simple, kindly life closed when Miss Godfrey, only fifty-eight, was frightened to death. She had, during the latter part of her life, a true friend in Mr. Morell Theobald, who took charge of her scanty resources, and secured her a small weekly income.

PROFESSOR JASTROW—HIS ACCURACY AND TRUTHFULNESS.

By HUDSON TUTTLE.

We have had occasion to express our own opinion of the merit of Professor Jastrow's lucubrations. We give our readers herewith the benefit of the opinion of a competent critic, which we quote from the *Banner of Light*. It is well to scotch these gentry and expose their reckless statements, before they acquire a fictitious importance from being left alone. The late Dr. W. B. Carpenter was full of fussy importance till Mr. Crookes pricked the wind-bag and let the wind out. Faraday never met his Crookes, but, were another such critic to arise now, no heavy scientific appendages to his name would save him from being told plain truths in a plain way. Here, then, is Tuttle on Jastrow.

"Professor Jastrow, in the April number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, airs his *exposé* of Spiritualism in a blatant manner which that journal would not tolerate on any other subject. Not content, he has climbed upon the pedestal of *Harper's Monthly*, and reiterated his stale platitudes—stale except when false, for Professor Jastrow is not a little George Washington; the strength of his argument depends on quite another quality.

"Who is he? The Cyclopædias do not tell you, nor is it easy to find any authority for his being except his sudden appearance; and he is allowed to appear not because of his literary or scientific ability, but because these journals that give him a place herald anything bidding for popular favour, and opposing Spiritualism.

"I have no desire to enter into a detailed review of the 'Professor's' articles, for the consideration of one of his reckless statements is quite sufficient to show their worth, and the character of the man. After saying that Spiritualists are wholly incompetent to observe, and that all mediums are frauds, and all manifestations tricks, he says:—

"Add to this the confession of an exposed medium, D. D. Home: 'The first séance I held after it became known to the Rochester people that I was a medium, a gentleman from Chicago recognised his daughter Lizzie in me after I had covered my small moustache with a piece of flesh-coloured cloth and reduced the size of my face with a shawl I had purposely hung in the back of my cabinet.'

"Knowing that D. D. Home, who for many years before his death was an intimate and cherished friend, never was exposed, never held a séance for pay, and scorned the slightest appearance of fraud, I emphatically contradicted the brutal statement, and wrote to Mrs. Home, inquiring if she could recall any incident on which it might have been founded. To this she replied as follows, under date of May 23rd, from Geneva, Switzerland:—

"I write in haste, owing to the pressure on my time entailed by preparations for my journey to Russia. . . . I shall be much obliged if you will kindly inform me who the Professor Jastrow is of whom you speak, and send me the publications in which his ridiculous falsehood concerning Mr. Home appeared. The peculiar impudence of the story consists in the fact that it has been taken from one of the exposures of trickery published by Mr. Home himself in *Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism*. If you will turn to page 405 of the American edition of that work, under the heading 'Trickery and its Exposure,' you will find the passage he quotes, word for word. It was taken by Mr. Home from an American journal of the year 1876, but as he purposely omitted the names of such persons I do not know to whom it referred further than that the person's name was 'J——.' I thank you for having called our attention to this falsehood, and hope the details I here furnish will expose the mendacity of the story and the person who has published it."

"The peculiarly aggravated circumstances of this charge against Mr. Home cannot be fully appreciated without reference to the book, *Lights and Shadows*. In that work Mr. Home is exceedingly severe on tricksters and frauds of all kinds. The reader may not have the volume at hand, and I quote from p. 405, that comparison may be made:—

"The second materialiser had much method in his 'mediumship.' The town favoured with his presence was Rochester, N.Y., and his career, though short, seems to have been decidedly brilliant. Nemesis, in the shape of sceptical investigators, pursued him, however, and at length, when ingenuity availed no longer, the affidavit of the entrapped 'medium' made clear to whoever cared to read it the mystery of his show. I extract the chief points of the document in question.

"The first séance I held after it became known to the Rochester people that I was a medium, our penitent illusionist writes, 'a gentleman from Chicago recognised his daughter Lizzie in me after I had

covered my small moustache with a piece of flesh-coloured cloth and reduced the size of my face with a shawl I had purposely hung up in the back of the cabinet. From this sitting my fame began to spread."

"A full account of the tricks and confession is then given, concluding with the following:—

"But this genius no longer adorns the scenes of his triumph. 'J —,' says the *Spiritual Scientist*, has left the city of Rochester—for obvious reasons. With a regret that the talents this pretended medium evidently possessed should have been wasted in such unworthy deception let us also pass on."

"Professor Jastrow had the book before him. He had read the pages which went before and followed, else he could not have made the selection. He could not have mistaken the meaning of Mr. Home, who wrote with admirable clearness. The position he has placed himself in is most unenviable, most pitiable; and the poor pay of a magazine writer is slight recompense, not only for this want of scientific accuracy, but of perversion of the truth."

An additional reason for calling attention to this reckless piece of criticism on the part of Professor Jastrow is supplied by the fact that the July number of the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* contains a long and very close review of *The Life and Letters of D. D. Home*, signed by Professor W.F. Barrett and Mr. F.W. H. Myers, in which the writers expressly state that, after minute inquiry, they can discover "nothing which we can style conviction of fraud," and draw special attention to the "great importance of this primary admission." This important notice we hope to recur to, for it contains an analysis of one block of evidence which leaves nothing to be desired for completeness, though the writers apparently do not fully appreciate the extent to which it is corroborated and sustained by the experience and observation of others.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I think "Colenso" in his remarks concerning heredity makes an assertion which is not born out by fact. He says that "The task of nature, or God, is to stimulate everywhere the action of heredity in adjusting the circumstances of each re-birth." Experience teaches us that the law of heredity is so often a failure that it cannot be called a law. Children do not take after their parents as a rule. Children are as often unlike their progenitors as similar to them; neither in personal appearance, build, stature, nor in disposition or mentality, can it be said that the child is always like the parent. Sometimes he is, sometimes he is not, and no rule can be applied to offspring. As I understand Re-incarnation, the awaiting Ego will find a home in this state where worldly circumstances will give scope for the education of some feature in the Ego which has been undeveloped hitherto. I cannot accept the statement that "the Bishop of Oxford was necessarily pious, eloquent, and benevolent prior to his Devachanic sleep of 1,500 years ago." If that be true then it follows that "we are now what we always have been, and will be mentally and physically." *There is no progression there.* This seems to me to be more like the fact: the Ego of the Bishop was incarnated with dispositions of piety and benevolence, and talents of eloquence in order that he might develop those traits, an experience necessary to the perfection of the Ego in every respect. John Roberts Junior may have inherited his father's skill, or he may not; there is no reliable law of heredity. I should, however, imagine that his re-incarnation was to develop something better than billiard playing.

Dr. Wyld makes a mistake in his remarks upon the different qualities of children. If the different qualities of children of different parents are due to heredity, as he states ("LIGHT," p. 325, July 6th), then the qualities of children of the same parents are due to heredity also. But this he proves not to be, because, as he says, the qualities may be due to education, inspiration, or astrological causes. In his opinion also there is no law of heredity. The objection against the doctrine of Re-incarnation, that we have no memory of past lives, is not unanswerable. It is the result of our constitution. Assuming it to be true that man is a compound of, among other parts, spirit (Ego), human soul (intelligence), and matter (the physical body), it follows that spirit cannot come into contact with matter except by the medium of the human soul acting on the body-brain. What knowledge the Ego obtains in any life, or personality, is by willing the soul to act upon the brain. The human

soul can only obtain knowledge, or touch matter, through the brain. This knowledge is passed on to the Ego, or the Ego obtains knowledge and experience through the human soul; the Ego, being unable to reach the brain, cannot obtain knowledge of itself. As the human soul cannot receive knowledge except by the brain, the spirit cannot give its passed experience to the human soul or intelligence. The spirit would have to give this knowledge to the soul through the brain: but this it cannot do. As stated before, the Ego cannot come into contact with the brain. There is therefore a wide gulf between the Ego and the soul, over which the Ego cannot pass, while the soul can. The human soul can obtain intelligence through the brain, and pass it up to the spirit. The spirit cannot obtain intelligence through the brain, nor can it act on the brain so as to pass intelligence to the soul, the only way in which the soul can receive knowledge. There are, however, times when the spirit flashes thoughts to the soul, to the intelligence, without the aid of the reasoning brain. Such thoughts we call *intuitional*. They occur only at fitful moments, or in people with peculiar organisations. As a rule, the spirit cannot pass thoughts to the soul, or intelligence, because it cannot use the brain.

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is an impossibility to give in the short space of a letter, or even in a longer one, such as Mr. Sinnett's lecture, a full and complete exposition of the teachings of Re-incarnationists. Nothing short of a large treatise that will combine the various views that have been vouchsafed to us from various sources can even approximately blend into a logical and harmonious whole the mass of information already received.

Hence all that is possible in the present case is to combat as concisely as possible the errors of opponents to the doctrine; and to show in apparently doubtful points how they may be, and are, explained by our teachers.

Hence I beg to respond to Dr. Wyld's chief argument (and most other people's chief objection too) to the theory, viz., that we have no remembrance of pre-existence, nor has anyone else. Likewise that, by training, an entranced person may establish in his normal state a memory of that which occurs while the soul is out of the body. And, further, that loss of memory of previous existence would be an evil.

I am taught to consider these points as follows, and the explanations appear to me reasonable: 1. I am by no means so sure that none of the 50,000 millions (perhaps a good many more naughts would make Dr. Wyld's figures more accurate) of earth's inhabitants have no memories, no faint recollections of previous lives. Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana; in more recent times cases are spoken of in *Walker's Re-incarnation*; and Dr. Anna Kingsford, according to Mr. Maitland, affording probable examples of a power by which memory of previous lives may by training be established.

To assert "I cannot remember previous existence and therefore it does not exist," is as unphilosophical as the materialist's denial of spirit because he cannot touch it. The materialist, in spite of his present denial, will some day learn that there is more in nature than enters into his scheme of the universe; and so too may he that does not now remember the past, acquire the power to do so, according as he increases in spirituality. The Theosophists lead us to think that this is true. And the spiritual teachers of the medium Rose plainly say that it is so. In fact, that there are in the human soul germs of powers, that as yet are but germs; but which in due time expand and bear fruit. The principle of moral feeling or brotherly love is that which is expanding in our state of existence; and when that and others that have yet to grow have reached the necessary height, an attribute which they call the *eternal memory* develops; which is the power by which the soul is capable of recalling experiences prior to its last birth.

What is our normal memory? is a question the answer to which will show why we do not remember the experiences of the disembodied soul, and if we cannot remember them, surely it is not surprising that we cannot remember ante-natal events.

In the normal state the soul can only appreciate external states by means of the senses. Until any given object has produced its *cerebral photograph*: as physiology calls the impression made on the physical brain by any external matter, that matter is not appreciated by the soul. The soul in the normal state of a waking man is entirely dependent on these *photographs*, for consciousness of externals, and if it were not for these photographs, waking life would be a blank as to things without.

Memory is the mere ability of the soul to read past photographs; every time any photograph is re-read, that photograph or nerve centre becomes more deeply stamped, and therefore less liable to be eradicated or lost, and the more easily is it found by the soul re-seeking that old picture, on account of the chain of ideas or photographs leading to it becoming more easily traversed by the so-called nerve force, by whose means the soul is searching for its object.

From this, memory is the mere power of reading pictures of the past. In the embodied state these pictures are cerebral. In the disembodied state who can say where they are not located, when we think of the powers manifested after patient psychometric development. Probably psychometry will give a clue, by whose working, memory of previous existence may be established.

To assert that loss of memory would be an evil is to totally misunderstand the objects for which, according to our instructors, the soul returns to earth-life. We are taught that it comes here for a treble purpose at any rate. First as a penance, voluntarily assumed by the soul, to atone for and finally prove its hearty sorrow for errors committed. Second, as a trial in which the resolutions for good conduct, &c., are given a fair and unfettered test; in which the attributes, or traits of character, acquired in previous periods, are tested as to their solidity or permanence. And, third, as a training school in which progress on certain lines is more quickly acquired than it could be in the disembodied state.

These are the objects of Re-incarnation in our stage of evolution. When higher stages are reached, and there is no sin to atone for, and no trials requiring forgetfulness of the past are needed, we are informed that the eternal memory develops, by means of which the soul is able to pass behind its last birth and read the pictures produced in earlier states of being.

Further on Dr. Wyld says: "The different qualities of the mind existing between children of different parents is, of course, explained by heredity." It seems to me to be very unphilosophical to use the expression "of course." From that it would seem that Dr. Wyld assumes that because he can satisfy himself that heredity is a full and sufficient explanation of the phenomenon, there can be, and is, no other method of explaining it. And all others must necessarily be wrong. I beg to differ from him, and while admitting "heredity," and "physical or moral conditions of the parents," to have great influence on the offspring, I firmly believe that the child's previous Karma has infinitely more.

Although Dr. Wyld's letter contains many other points that are open to criticism, I fear I have encroached too much on your space, and must leave them to other and abler pens.

"1st M.B. (Lond.)"

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Nothing will alter the fact that ninety-nine out of a hundred who are bred in the Roman and Greek Churches become Re-incarnationists; while, until lately, perhaps ninety-nine out of a hundred bred in Protestant Churches, took a contrary view. It may be that psychic lore admits of but one step at a time. It was but one stage for the Romanists and Greeks to proceed in embracing the doctrine of Re-incarnation, since they already believed in Hades and purgatory; whilst Protestants, having been taught nothing of these things, but rather in sleep till a day of judgment, may have to hear of these two preliminaries first. I give this, however, but as an idea, with no desire to be dogmatical. All Churches, nevertheless, who use the Creeds, acknowledge Re-incarnation in the following words: "He ascended into Heaven . . . from whence He shall come to judge the quick."

One of your correspondents, with regard to the Elijah question, says: "The key to this will be found in the declaration 'He shall go before Him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah.'" On the contrary, the words "This is Elijah" are the key to the others, for a man may be in the spirit and power of Elijah who is not Elijah; but he must be in the spirit and power of Elijah if he "is Elijah."

Then, as regards the Mount of Transfiguration and the descent therefrom, your correspondent says: "The three disciples had seen and known the Baptist before his death, and if he had been in the literal sense a re-incarnation of the old prophet, these disciples would rather have recognised him than Elijah, whom they had never seen." My answer is, they did recognise him as identical with their old acquaintance; unlike the world in general, of whom Jesus said, when coming from the Mount: "They knew him not." As much

as to say: *You*, on the contrary, whom I have so often told of the identity of the two souls, *did* know him. Else why should it be added: "Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." (Matt. xvii. 12, 13).

Another of your correspondents says: "One horse may be a noble creature and another little better than an ass." Precisely so. Why should not improvement by Re-incarnation extend to animals? The Eastern religions have taught it all along, and still teach it; so did the Egyptians and Pythagoreans. Why should not even reptiles and insects rise by death and Re-incarnation to higher degrees of life? This seems to me the grand justification of ordaining men to live by tilling the land, regardless of the myriads of living creatures throughout the world dying agonising deaths by the spade and plough at every moment. For myself, I justify myself in killing insects on plants by my belief in the doctrine of improvement by Re-incarnation. And since I know that so humane and noble a man as General Gordon was a Re-incarnationist, I am proud of being, so far, in his company.

And now, a word as regards the forgetfulness of former lives. Do not our memory and intellect here work through the brain? What memory could work through the elementary mind-stuff of the brain of an embryo or a young infant? Would not a brain, in such a state, stop all memory and thought? And, the link lost, how could it be regained? Had not even Jesus to *increase* in wisdom as he increased in stature? He was thirty years old before his brain had become assimilated to the old powers of his soul and spirit, a penalty for putting on the flesh. T.W.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sure that the thanks of the public are due to you for admitting into your columns a discussion on this important subject, which has become very interesting and animated; and, on the side of the Re-incarnationists has certainly been conducted with undoubted skill and good temper.

As, however, it would require a volume to do anything like justice to the subject, neither time nor space is at our disposal for this purpose; and, therefore, your readers will be gratified to learn that this letter will be my last contribution to the discussion.

My opponents seem inclined to take me to task for not knowing more of the designs of the Almighty in the government of His creatures. As, however, He has not thought proper to invite me to His counsels and make me a partaker of His confidence, except so far as He has revealed Himself in His creations and in the revelation of the Christian Scriptures, I am necessarily as ignorant of His "mysterious ways" as my neighbours. If I am unable to solve some of the profound problems which have been submitted to my consideration, I must plead my inability to fathom the Divine purposes of God.

Your correspondent Joseph Clayton appears to think that he has placed an insurmountable stumbling-block in my path, when in answer to my view that the parents beget the souls as well as the bodies of their children, he replies that "in intellect, temper, and aspirations children do not follow their parents, as must be the case if the *soul stuff* belonged to their parents. If soul is anything it must have size, and if the soul comes from the parents, then it either grows with time or is full-sized when clothed with matter. If soul grows, where does it get the soul stuff from for its growth?" and so on.

This stumbling-block is easily surmounted, and presents no difficulty, when we consider that the soul is fed spiritually as the body is fed physically. Every particle of food that we take materially has its corresponding spiritual essence, and there is nothing carnal in the world that has not underlying it a spiritual sustenance. I should say that there are few propositions more thoroughly established than this interdependence of soul and body. Every idea of the mind influences the physical frame, and every bodily sensation is felt by the soul. As the body is materially clothed in this life, so we know as a fact that the soul is clothed after its separation from the body, and if the soul is clothed, what difficulty is there in supposing that it is also fed?

If, as your correspondent says, "The earth is necessary for the education of the soul," why, I ask, should not the same conditions be necessary for the food and growth of the soul?

He quotes the Bible: "Then shall the dust return, &c., and the spirit unto God who gave it." And then he dogmatically asserts, "Man is not the parent of the spirit." I believe that God gave everything that exists. If he gave the spirit He also gave the body of man; and the parents are the instruments

with which he works. If the souls of children do not resemble the souls of their parents, we must bear in mind that the quality and characteristics of the soul are influenced not only by the parents, but by a long line of ancestors.

"Janmantra, F.T.S." enters upon the wide subject of responsibility. On this topic I must content myself with remarking that there is no responsibility where free-will is suppressed, and we know too well how often this suppression is paramount in this world. Responsibility is only demanded from us when the will is free to act.

"Janmantra, F.T.S." rather scoffs at the idea of religion rescuing a soul from the suffering entailed by wrong-doing; but my view is that no religion has any efficacy unless it is adopted, cherished and practised by those to whom it is offered.

Your correspondent is in error when he states that I represented Re-incarnation as "the latest product of the philosophy of its advocates."

I made no such statement. What I did say was, that Mr. Sinnett's lecture was "the latest product of the philosophy of its advocates." Of course everyone knows that the idea of Re-incarnation is the oldest and most wide-spread of beliefs; but I have yet to learn that the antiquity of a belief, and the numbers who support it, are any guarantee of its truth.

Your correspondent asks me—"Was the man born blind a spiritual manifestation of a great departed prophet or saint?"

I meekly answer that I do not know; but I hope not. If the purpose of Re-incarnation is to develop and improve the human race, it seems to me to be singularly unsuccessful in its mission; if it be true as the Bishop of Liverpool deplored, and Mr. Clayton quotes his opinion with approval, "that the state of society and its wickedness is (sic) worse than ever it was."

Mr. Joseph Clayton tells us that Re-incarnation "does to a great extent deprive beings of their past consciousness or memory"; an admission which is somewhat opposed to the teaching of Mr. Sinnett who maintains that the past memories, experiences, and conscious acquirements must be "distilled" or "vibrated" out of our souls, before they can be rendered fit for Re-incarnation. He kindly gives us a choice of processes "distillation" or "vibration." I have not made up my mind which to prefer as a solution of my difficulty; but he also allows that there may be a "promature" Re-incarnation, in which case if the prematurity is very recent a man may unconsciously marry his grandmother.

London.

NEWTON CROSLAND

July 12th, 1889.

P.S.—I do not object to your view that we must not be afraid of listening to unpalatable doctrines, as we are not thereby committed to their acceptance, but in growing "wider," we must be careful that we do not also grow lax, latitudinarian, and indifferent towards what we regard as truth.

[This is an important point, and bears a further word. It would be very wrong, foolish, and even wicked to palter with assured truth. But Mr. Crosland forgets that we are all inquirers, seeking to interpret demonstrated facts, respecting which a multiplicity of explanations have been given. We have no body of truth respecting such explanation and interpretation which all accept as axiomatic or absolutely proven. Hence the importance of carefully weighing all reasonable speculations.—Ed. of LIGHT.]

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I had put aside Mr. Sinnett's address for a quiet hour, and cannot now, after perusal, lay it aside without an expression of disappointment. From so able an exponent of Theosophy I expected better things.

Without presuming to combat the doctrine one may perhaps be permitted to say that Mr. Sinnett signally fails to establish a rational ground for his belief, and the fact that millions of Eastern and a few Western minds share it with him affords neither proof nor probability of its truth.

The conception of Re-incarnation is non-natural, and contrary to the scientific doctrines of Evolution and heredity, which latter are at any rate susceptible of proof.

In the absence of sound argument and logic, there is an attempt at analogy—but the return of the rain drops and the leaves fall as an analogy for the return of individual souls.

According to Mr. Sinnett the inequalities of this stage of being are to be rectified by the soul's return, so we may suppose that the dustman may, in the next incarnation, return a Duke, but it is surely a fallacy to assume that the lessons of earth-life

may not equally well be learnt by high and low, and in the absence of memory of what service to the individual is the previous experience?

If, as Mr. Sinnett implies, Re-incarnation has always been a law for man, I would like to ask from whence, in the early dawn of the race, the new individuals in the second generation arose? Whence came the men's souls which peopled the multiplying bodies of succeeding generations?

To my mind the doctrine of Re-incarnation is contrary both to sense and science!

T. P.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of July 6th, Dr. Wyld has raised issues against Mr. Sinnett's lecture on "Re-incarnation." That the theory of "Re-incarnation" has not been accepted by scientific men for the last 2,000 years is no proof against the truth of it. For nearly the same length of time the majority of men did not accept (for they knew nothing of them) the laws of "the Conservation of Energy" or the "Correlation of Forces." There were, however, some few who in their writings hinted at Re-incarnation, and these few were the initiated philosophers—those who were also acquainted with the above-named laws. During the century when these laws have been re-discovered and proclaimed exoterically the law of "Re-incarnation" is also proclaimed, for on the "moral" plane it is the analogue of the "Conservation of Energy" and the "Correlation of Forces" on the physical plane. In fact on the basis of these two laws incarnation necessitates Re-incarnation in order that causes may manifest as effects.

But, as Dr. Wyld says, this might just as well apply to Re-incarnation on some other globe, were it not for the manifestation of energy on the sphere and on the plane to which it belongs. Thus the soul which is manifesting energy, which is an energy, on earth, will continue to manifest on earth so long as it continues to attach itself to the things of earth—so long as it is ordinarily human. When it becomes superhuman, lives its double life, distinguishes between the two, and has fulfilled every duty which belongs to the earth, then it is freed, as the Orientals put it, "from the cycle of re-birth." Until then the soul re-incarnates on earth; afterwards, having "rendered to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," it passes on into other states of existence.

But Dr. Wyld urges also that Mr. Sinnett admits the "difficulty of the total ignorance, from the absence of memory, as to the identities of the re-incarnated." On the other hand he states that Mr. Sinnett regards this as beneficent. It seems to me that it is first of all necessary to know what memory is, and to examine what the loss of it implies. Dr. Wyld seems to contradict himself in urging this assertion and then saying that there is a difference between the entranced and the ordinary state. He also says that by training it is possible to bridge the gap between the two states. Precisely so does the occultist say that it is possible to bridge the gap between successive incarnations. Let man first recover the facts of his consciousness during sleep, and, after sleep, recover the minute details of his life, even of the previous day only, before he can urge the loss of memory as a conclusive argument against Re-incarnation. Once grant the recording medium of the astral light and he has at once the keynote of the matter. The physical body is moulded on the impressions in the astral light, and the soul reads those records like an open book. Psychometers trace the events of all time, and it is possible to train all men to be psychometers. Were this done, Re-incarnation would be a proven fact by the internal knowledge against which there is no dispute. In view of the facts and records of Psychometry, I cannot but wonder at Dr. Wyld disputing the idea of Re-incarnation on such illogical grounds. Will Dr. Wyld assert that he can remember all the facts of his life on any day in his seventh year, since when he has had many physiological re-incarnations? On his own showing, if he cannot do so, he is not now incarnated at all; or he is re-incarnated and this earth is no longer the earth it was, but is now some other planet.

As regards the beneficence of the loss of memory I would agree with Mr. Sinnett, though on other grounds. It is seldom that men are brave enough to face the consequences of their own deeds, and on the law of Re-incarnation man would have a sword of Damocles suspended over his head through the greater part of his life. Thus I cannot but regard the absence of memory as beneficent.

Dr. Wyld appeals to "Here lity" as explaining the differences in life which trouble thoughtful minds. It is plain that

Dr. Wyld has not kept himself *au courant* with one of the most vexed problems of the scientific world of to-day. Had he done so he would be aware that the theory which is most generally viewed with favour is Professor Weissman's "Germ-Plasm as the Foundation of a Theory of Heredity"; which theory Madame Blavatsky has also favourably reviewed in Vol. I. of the *Secret Doctrine*. There is no space to enter upon it here, but I content myself with saying that this theory will go far to prove the truth of Re-incarnation.

Dr. Wyld attempts to ridicule Mr. Sinnett in contrasting black and white men and in urging the probability on the line of Re-incarnation of piebald infants. This argument is precisely the same as judging the moral condition of a man by the tattered condition of his garments. In fact the whole tenor of Dr. Wyld's letter is that of transcendental materialism.

As regards the discontent of the poor man in some cases, it seems more rational to regard it as the condition of the soul in regard to the exercise of power which it once had and which it has betrayed and lost. As Dr. Wyld says, there are many contented poor and many rich who are unhappy because too idle to take up their responsibilities. Wealth is more surely the evidence of some power or mis-application of power inherent in soul than anything else.

Dr. Wyld does not seem to remember the evolution of nations in his sneer at the East. Nor does he seem to regard as important the fact that at the time when the Vedas and the Eastern Scriptures were written we have evidence of a civilisation in advance even of that of the Western nations of to-day. To use this argument is precisely the same as to call upon Macaulay's historical New Zealander to judge of present English prosperity by relics drawn from the East End of London to-day.

As regards your correspondent "J. W. F." I cannot say much. There are some Swedenborgians with whom I am acquainted who take the opposite view and assert that Swedenborg supported Re-incarnation in his writings. But "J. W. F." in writing of the "guardian spirit" seems to be only alluding to the more or less perfected soul of the incarnated man. It is that sublimated creation of his own which helps him to higher things, and is opposed to the degraded essence of his personal lives—that which forms for him the "Dweller on the Threshold."

When we examine the assertion that the disciples' recognition of Elijah by interior processes disproves the idea that John the Baptist was a Re-incarnation of Elijah, a closer regard will show that it is not the case. The boy of fourteen and the man of 49 years of age are incarnations of the same soul though they differ in external appearance to our senses. The very fact that by internal means the disciples recognised Elijah, shows that they were not using their external senses. They were dealing with the *individual soul* which incarnated both as Elijah and as John the Baptist and not with the astral *reliquie* of the latter.

Finally, "J. W. F." alludes to the infinite duration of the perfected life. It is only by learning the continual lessons taught by pain and suffering that men attain to perfection, and Re-incarnation alone affords to the soul the scope and opportunity to attain perfection. The soul itself does this; otherwise it cannot "contribute to and share in the blessedness of the whole." It is not the facts of such a condition which are in dispute; it is the means whereby the condition is attained.

"RESURGAM."

Madame Blavatsky's Probation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In the year 1885, in the month of November, I went to Würzburg and spent a whole winter entirely alone with Madame Blavatsky. During the long evenings which we spent together I used to delight in talking to her about her strange experiences, and again and again has she repeated to me that she was only three years in Thibet. The seven years' probation previous to initiation of which Mr. Sinnett writes need not necessarily be spent in Thibet.

This word of explanation may be of use to some of your readers.
(COUNTESS) CONSTANCE WACHTMEISTER.

"Colenso" and Madame Blavatsky.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reference to your correspondent, "Colenso's" letter of July 6th, in which he plays Aunt Sally with his own misconceptions of the philosophy of Eastern Occultism, which has been made known to the West by the instrumentality of Madame Blavatsky, allow me to remind him and your readers

that the "Shell evangel," as he so humorously terms it, only claims to cover part of the ground of the phenomena of mixed séances and ordinary mediumship; there are other and far more important factors, hints of which he will discover in *The Secret Doctrine*, if he care to continue his studies.

If, however, he knows anything of Occultism, he must be only too well aware that any categorical explanation of such phenomena would be far from prudent in the present state of affairs.

If also he would remember that "probation" is *independent of place*, he would be wise. It is again a case of the "letter that killeth."

"Colenso" seeks to establish the proposition that the source from which Madame Blavatsky claims to obtain her information does not exist.

If so, whence did she obtain the translation of the *Book of Dzyan* and the commentaries thereon? It would certainly be curious for those who know Madame Blavatsky to hear "Colenso's" theory.
ONE WHO HAS THAT HONOUR.

"Colenso" and Theosophy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Permit me to say a few words in reference to the "Perplexities of Theosophy," of which your correspondent "Colenso" makes so much in the issue of July 6th.

He claims to be a "student of Theosophy," and I therefore began to peruse his letter with great interest. Unfortunately, he reveals at the very outset that his knowledge of the subject is quite infantile, for his grasp of its principles is feeble in the extreme.

It has been repeatedly explained in our elementary text books, that the law of Heredity is comprehended in the greater law of Karma, as one of its physical manifestations. The Re-incarnations Ego is attracted into a body produced under hereditary influence according to the Karmic affinities, the Ego has engendered in previous lives; and thus the law of heredity is but the means to an end. It is a pity that your correspondent should have so imperfectly mastered the only book he has read on the subject, a book, by-the-by, that in no sense claims to be an exhaustive or complete statement. To say that an interval of 1,500 years between two successive births is "a rigid law" is a misrepresentation of the facts, as Mr. Sinnett himself says that the length of this period varies within very wide limits.

I should much like to know where, in Theosophical teachings, this "student" has seen it stated that such an advanced "disciple of Apollonius" as himself could be reborn in his next birth as the son of a criminal? Such an idea is a gross caricature of the law of Karma. But as it is certain that "Colenso" is not the son of the said criminal, so it is still more certain that he was not a disciple of Apollonius. Thus the only thing the argument "renders patent" is his own misconception of the doctrine he attacks.

"Colenso" seems to imagine that Theosophists believe that "at the moment of dissolution the individual practically becomes two individuals." Another and still grosser mis-representation! When a man dies and leaves his physical body behind, are there two individuals? Yet the body can be galvanised into a semblance of life and activity. Similarly, when the "second death" takes place, and the Ego passes into the Devachanic state (which it is well to remember does not occur till after a more or less prolonged interval), why should the image, reflection, or shell left behind in the astral world be considered as an "individual." Like the physical body it can, under certain conditions, be caused to simulate life and activity; but from what source, I ask, does "Colenso" draw his ideas about a fiendish Mephistopheles? A vivid imagination, stimulated by crude, undigested reading must, I suppose, be his excuse.

But errors must be pardoned to so young a student, especially when he is so frank and candid in acknowledging his ignorance, as when he speaks of an executed criminal awakening in fifteen seconds in Devachan, in a state of super angelic purity!

As regards his criticism of Mr. Sinnett's statements about Madame Blavatsky, I prefer to leave it to that lady whether she will condescend to set him right or no. But I must observe in reference to his closing paragraph that the "seven years' probation" of which he makes such a point need no more be spent (as stated by Mr. Sinnett himself) in Thibet, than a man engaged in marriage need spend the whole period of his engagement at the altar.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY, F.T.S.

A Mysterious Disappearance.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having read lately *The Mystery of Cloomber*, I beg to relate what was told me by a chaplain of a Man-of-war some nineteen years ago. What he told me was this—in substance. The captain was a very bad man, and cursed and swore freely, and boasted of deeds of blood in the Indies, and of having killed some of their best men, and one of their religious chiefs. One evening, before sunset, when he had been more than usually anxious and uneasy after one of these swearing fits he was seen to watch very intently as if expecting some one. Presently he left the ship, looking very wild and strange, and went ashore, and was seen to join two foreign looking men seemingly Hindus. He went between them but was not held by either of them, but was presently recognised in their company ascending the crater of Mount Vesuvius. On they went, and arriving at the edge of the crater the three men disappeared. Some time after the two reappeared and descended the mountain, but the Captain was never again heard of, though search was made for him and the other two.

This is simply the story as it was told me by my relative who was then chaplain about 1825-39, and being then ignorant of Spiritualism I did not inquire, as I should have done, the name of the vessel and the date of the event. All I remember asking was, "What was the result?" and he said the Captain was reported as "having in a fit of insanity wandered and lost himself"; the fact of two others being seen with him being looked on as a delusion.

I enclosed the name of the chaplain, who I regret to say is dead some fifteen years, and also his address at the time, when he held a living in Northumberland. I. O.

P.S.—Perhaps some of your readers perusing this might know of the circumstance alluded to it?

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

Theosophical Siftings, Nos. 5 and 6. (See advertisement on front page.) [These numbers contain "Universal Brotherhood," "Scientific Basis of Occultism," "Practical Theosophy," "The Valley of the Quest," and "Karma as a Cure for Trouble." Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.] Price 3d.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS.—The Editor begs the indulgence of all who write to him during his absence from London. He fears that it will be impossible for him to attend to letters while constantly travelling from place to place. The same reason forces him to ask that MSS. may be sent as early as possible, and that they may be brief, as the general plan of the paper must be arranged some time beforehand, and previous to his departure on July 24th.

G.F.B. (Dresden).—Many letters on the subject were reluctantly declined. See notices to other correspondents.

"PERPLEXED."—We do not desire to occupy our columns with a discussion which would almost certainly be fruitless. Our space is small, and your letter raises no question of general interest.

CAVALIERE SEBASTIANO FENZI.—Your kind words are reciprocated. We are all of us liable to be misunderstood. Our feelings to one who has done so much as you have were never anything but perfectly friendly.

LOVER OF "LIGHT."—Your complaint would have had more force ten years since. There has been done a vast amount of purification chiefly by the combined action taken in London against the abuses of dark séances and cabinets. Time is needed, and you might profitably consider the Parable of the Tares and the Wheat. Excuse us for declining to open the subject in our columns, though we are quite in accord with your general sentiment.

COUNTESS ADELMA VAY WURMBRAND.—We have written privately to you, but are not sure of your address. In case the letter miscarries, we give here the substance of what we purpose. The English dress must be revised for the Press. We will have that done and the MSS. written by a typewriter, if you so authorise. Then we will print in suitable instalments. May we ask for prompt reply, as we shall be out of London all August and part of September?

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Lees lectured at the above place. The room was full, and a pleasant evening was spent. On Sunday next Mr. Ivor Macdonnell.—Mr. GIFFORD, Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, 290, GOSWELL-ROAD (GOSWELL HALL).—In connection with the above the following open-air meetings will be held: Peckham Rye, July 21st, 3 p.m., Messrs. Rodgers, Lees, and Long; July 28th, Battersea Park, near band stand, 3 p.m., Messrs. Goddard, Rodgers, Lees, Hopcroft, and Long.—J. VEITCH, Sec.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION, 295, LAVENDER HILL, S.W.—Just before the commencement of our meeting last Sunday, a message arrived stating that, through illness, Mr. Vango was unable to attend. Mr. A. W. Goddard then addressed the meeting on "Spiritualism and its Teachings." A friendly discussion ensued, in which Mr. Barker and others took part. During the evening Mr. Scott gave a recitation entitled "Over the Hills from the Poorhouse," which was much applauded. The collection, on behalf of Mrs. Harvey, amounted to 8s. 6d. Next Sunday, Mr. F. Dever-Summers will lecture on "Intellect: not of Divine Origin."—F.D.S.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD, W.—Attendance is given at the above rooms every Friday, 10.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., and Saturday 10.30 to four, Sunday morning eleven to 12.45, the latter for pure Spiritual intercourse or devotional exercises, the former for answering questions on Psychical and Social Problems; there will be a variety of useful articles on sale Friday and Saturday to defray expenses, rent, &c., also with a view of showing how a system of trading may be instituted to secure fair dealing.—J. M. DALE.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Satisfactory reports as to the Society's progress were given at the general meeting on the 9th inst. Mr. J. T. Andy was unanimously re-elected president for the ensuing half-year. Our number of members is steadily increasing, we now number eighty adults and over thirty children. A benevolent fund has been commenced for the purpose of assisting our sick and distressed brethren. On Sunday morning last Mr. Joseph Humphries addressed us on "Conversion," and in the evening we had a first visit from Mr. T. L. Henly, whose address was the "Religion of the Future." On Sunday next, Mr. R. J. Lees, at eleven and 6.30.—W. E. LONG.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Rodger, of King's-cross, addressed a fair audience upon the subject of "Worship." Addresses were also given by Messrs. Earl and Drake. The committee solicits donations from friends to maintain the services through the summer months. Next Sunday at seven Mr. Earl and Mr. Matthews. Open-air work: Last Sunday afternoon Mr. Rodger addressed a large assembly in Hyde Park, near the Marble Arch, subject, "The Principles of Spiritualism." Messrs. Hopcroft and Drake also addressed the meeting. Next Sunday at 3, p.m. Mr. Hopcroft and others. Thanks to our friends who have sent literature for distribution.—W. O. DRAKE, Hon. Sec.

KING'S CROSS, 148, COPENHAGEN-STREET.—On Sunday morning last a paper on "Spiritualistic Education" by Mr. Smith elicited an intelligent expression of opinion from Messrs. Yates, Rodgers, Cowderoy, Waught, Lindley, Battell, and Reynolds. There exists in this community an unmistakable desire to import more bone and muscle into the flimsy literature which prevails. The society desires to gratefully acknowledge a present of books from Mr. Cowderoy and another from Miss Todd. If our richer brethren were only aware of the thirst for knowledge which prevails in this poor locality they would help us to satisfy the need. Miss Rodgers has consented to act as librarian. The Friday circle having completed its number is now closed. Another circle will be formed when a sufficient number of names is sent to the Hon. Sec., J. B. DALY, 53, Hartham-road, Holloway, N.

MR. AND MRS. EVERITT IN LIVERPOOL.—The members of the Liverpool Psychological Society had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Everitt, of Hendon, last week, when Mr. Everitt delivered two addresses on his experiences in psychic studies during the last thirty-five years. Mrs. Everitt kindly gave two séances in the committee-room of Daully Hall, about twenty being present on each occasion, the raps being loud and distinct; the direct voice was clear and emphatic in reply to questions, as well as tendering advice to inquirers. Lights were also observed of different sizes, colour, and brilliancy. In short, the manifestations were of an extremely satisfactory character, and the members of the society desire to thus express publicly their indebtedness to the friends who so kindly placed their services at their disposal.—JOHN LAMONT (President Liverpool Psychological Society).

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy, will send a description of it FREE to any Person who applies to NICOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.